

# graphics lab

the pedagogy of the sketchbook

[syllabus]

monday, tuesday, thursday: 10:00 – 11:30  
wednesday: field studies  
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## course description + organization

The purpose of the graphics laboratory is to support the aims and goals of the study abroad program as a whole. This course is organized primarily around the sketchbook as both site and means of analysis and study.

### sketching workshop

The development of the sketch as the necessary and central tool in the intellectual development of the design student will be guided and supported by media and technical exercises. Daily, in-class exercises and practice are considered to be a part of the sketching workshop and will include both one-on-one as well as group instruction. Media, processes, and techniques will be explored by each student in order to support both urban seminar semester studies and design studio projects. Students will be encouraged to explore and refine the sketchbook as a palimpsest: a composite that gathers together the pieces of the field experiences along with analytical sketching and situational studies. Guidance and support will be provided for each of the wednesday field studies throughout the semester.

### field studies

Field studies and sketching will be the center of the entire italia20.10 program. The sketchbook serves as the vehicle and site for this study. Work done in the field will then contribute to both the urban seminar and the design studio. Along with drawing exercises, designed to support the development of the "line" of each student individually, the field work will serve to document the architecture of the urban fabric: the space, structure, and elements of the piazza. This focus on the relationship between the solid and void of the city will not negate the value on the study of individual buildings, their plans, sections, and elevations. Public buildings, such as churches or town halls are necessarily woven into the city's public "rooms". Individual elements belonging to the townscape – from the scale of a building down to the scale of the material connections and details – will be another focus of the field analysis. In addition, the museum, as a site of containment and display, will be studied through sketching. Thus, the depth of history, the immediacy of the material present, and the possibility of design will be brought into dialog with each other. The material body of the wall and the relationship between inside and outside – private to public space – as mediated by the wall, will also afford opportunities for analytical study.

Throughout the course of the semester, numerous field trips – consisting of extended multi-day trips, day trips, and independent travel – will expose the student to a wealth of public spaces and urban elements within the Medieval and Renaissance fabric of the Italian townscape. The primary focus will be on the architectural language and spatial organization of the piazza (or campo). Students will explore and analyze the nature, character, and elements of both specific urban "rooms" and the "in-between" spaces discovered by each student. Students are encouraged to draw their experiences and the diversity of places that they visit during the semester into focus through the sketchbook: collecting and arranging the fragments culled from experiences.

NOTE: This Syllabus is provided for informational purposes regarding the anticipated course content and schedule. It is based on the most recent information available as of the date of its issuance. It is as accurate and complete as is possible at this time. The instructors reserve the right to make any changes deemed necessary and/or appropriate. An effort will be made to communicate any syllabus changes in a timely manner. Students are responsible for being aware of these changes.

Tickets, business cards, menus, lists, maps, bits of information, comments, journal entries, various collaged images – all contribute to a certain richness of the sketchbook. In this way, the sketchbook becomes a “portmanteau” that gathers, analyzes, documents, and searches to make sense of the range of the student’s experiences. The student is encouraged to consider their sketchbook as a series of layers that accrue over time, not merely as field documentation. Students should return to the field sketches and “complete” them – perhaps at a café or in the evening. This requires the development of a method of seeing / thinking while in the field. The sketchbook is a journal, a palimpsest, a record, a repository, a collection...

Prior to any such departure from Castiglione Fiorintino, each student is required to submit a brief outline notifying the professor of their trip and schedule.

**evaluation**

Students will be evaluated based on the following:

field studies / the sketchbook	50%
sketch workshop (studio practice)	30%
“composite sketchbook”	10%
development	10%

**the composite sketchbook**

Each student will submit a composite sketchbook that presents their strongest work of the semester. It will demonstrate the students sketching abilities and the development of their “line”. Technological limitations may prevent the actual completion of the physical sketchbook while in Italy, therefore, students will be required to print out the final digital version of their composite sketchbook immediately following their return. It is due on the day of the scheduled final exam (the last day of final exams according to the UTSA calendar) at 5:00 pm. Students not returning to San Antonio with the group should provide their final version (on appropriate paper) prior to that time. A pdf copy will be submitted at that time as well as the jpg raw scans (at 600 dpi) of all included material. Requirements: 1) chapbook; 2) saddle stitched; 3) 20 sketchbook spreads (left and right pages) + cover.

The composite sketchbook is to include the strongest spreads from your sketchbook. Use additional captions as necessary to indicate date and place. Student contact information, class / program information, and date are to be included on the back cover in 8 pt type. Please note that actual sketchbooks will be graded separately and returned prior to our departure from Italy. The sketchbooks will be reviewed at the same time as the studio work is presented.

**class policies**

- laboratory and field trip attendance is mandatory
- you are responsible for all material covered in class (lab and field trips) and for all assignments and exercises
- all work submitted for completion of this course will be governed by the standards of “scholastic dishonesty” in the UTSA undergraduate catalog. see also the faculty handbook (section VI, chapter 2, section 2.37) (plagiarism and its results will be discussed in class)
- participating, engaging, and presenting (in both formal and informal presentations), are necessary components of the laboratory environment
  - you must be prepared to engage the faculty
- no late arrivals or early departures.
- turn your cell phone off while in the lab – no instant messaging is permitted; however, your cell phone will prove useful while in the field
- all note taking is to be done by hand during the seminar in order to facilitate remembering and contribute to your page / sketchbook
- there will be no time extensions for assignments.
- completed work will be archived for accreditation of the architectural program with the exception of your sketchbooks

